

October 25, 2017

Michigan Chapter
of the Alexander Graham Bell
Association for the Deaf
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House of Representatives
Health Policy Committee
Attention: Rep. Hank Vaupel, Chair
P.O. Box 30014
Lansing, MI 48909-7514

Re: HB 5159- Deaf, Deaf-Blind, and Hard of Hearing Children's
Educational Bill of Rights

Dear Rep. Vaupel and Members of the Health Policy Committee:

I am the representative of the Michigan Chapter of the Alexander Graham Bell Association for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (MI A.G. Bell). The Michigan Chapter of the Alexander Graham Bell Association for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (MI A.G. Bell) supports HB 5159 - Deaf, Deaf-Blind, and Hard of Hearing Children's Education Bill of Rights.

In this letter at page 2, I describe the MI AG Bell and highlight specific provisions of HB 5159 that would benefit Deaf, Deaf Blind, and Hard of Hearing children.

At page 3 the MI AG Bell is requesting that additional provisions be added to this bill that would further benefit Deaf, Deaf Blind, and Hard of Hearing children.

But, even if those requested provisions are not added, the *MI A.G. Bell is asking that the members of this Health Policy Committee vote "Yes" on HB 5159.*

We want to thank Representative Phelps and Representative Howrylak for their work on HB 5159.

The Michigan Chapter of the Alexander Graham Bell Association for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (MI A.G. Bell) is a state chapter of the national Alexander Graham Bell Association for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing. Our organization is a Michigan non-profit corporation which is devoted to benefitting children who are deaf and hard of hearing. Our membership is composed of parents of deaf and hard of hearing children, teachers of deaf and hard of hearing students, speech and language pathologists, audiologists, and adults who are deaf or hard of hearing. We provide: 1) a summer camp program for children with hearing loss, 2) conferences for professionals and for parents directed toward the education of children who are deaf and hard of hearing, and 3) resources to parents and professionals who work with children who have hearing loss.

The MI AG Bell Fall Conference is on Thursday November 9, 2017 at the Macomb Intermediate School District, and it is entitled, "Back to School Essentials for Students with Hearing Loss: Exploring Literacy & Assessments."

Specific provisions of HB 5159 that would benefit Deaf, Deaf Blind, and Hard of Hearing children

The HB 5159 at subsection 5 provides that the parent has "sole discretion to determine which language and communication mode option or options are best to further his or her deaf, deafblind, or hard of hearing child's educational progress".

At subsection 1 (G) the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) shall provide resources for the "Deaf, Deaf Blind, or Hard of Hearing child's family with accurate and complete information regarding the child's educational, language, and communication mode needs and all program options, and with access to support and advocacy services" of knowledgeable organizations.

At subsection 2 the school district "shall provide programs and services to the child that maximize his or her potential in language and communication mode."

There are other positive programs in this bill that will additionally benefit deaf, deaf blind, and hard of hearing children.

The Michigan A.G. Bell requests that these additional provisions be added to HB 5159.

This request is based upon the statements made by parents, professionals, and advocates at the March 2017 Stakeholders meeting and the 2014 Supplement to the Joint Committee on Infant Hearing Screening (JCIH 2007 Position Statement), the MI AG Bell Requests an addition to the Draft 3 Deaf, Deaf Blind, and Hard of Hearing Children's Educational Bill of Rights Law at subsection 4 to add (C) and (D):

"4) A state agency, institution, or department involved in early intervention and early childhood and K-12 education of deaf, deaf blind, or hard of hearing children is encouraged to develop specific guidelines establishing how that state agency, institution, or department is able to contribute to the following objectives: (The following in *italics* is requested to be added)

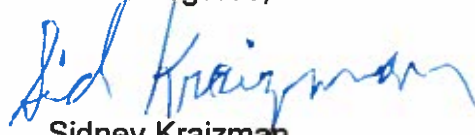
"(C) providing services for Deaf, Deaf Blind, and Hard of Hearing children age 0 to 3 years in the language and communication mode chosen by their parents or guardian and timely providing intervention service coordinators and early intervention service providers who have specialized knowledge and skills related to working with deaf, deaf blind, and hard of hearing infants and toddlers and their parents in that language and communication mode. Intervention Services to teach American Sign Language (ASL), Cued Speech or Sign Supported Speech will be provided by professionals who have fluent skills in that language or mode of communication and are trained to teach parents and families and young children. Intervention Services to develop listening and spoken language will be provided by professionals who have specialized skills and knowledge in the field of listening and spoken language and are trained to teach parents and families and young children. These professionals should be provided with in service training, evaluation, and mentoring to increase their skills in providing listening and spoken language development, sign supported speech, cued speech, and ASL.

"(D) Providing services and programs to Deaf, Deaf Blind, and Hard of Hearing children geared to achieve where reasonably possible : readiness for kindergarten comparable to children with typical hearing; and English literacy (receptive, expressive, and written) by the end of third grade comparable with typical hearing third grade peers."

Discussion: Paragraph C is a summary of the Goal 2 and 3 of the 2014 supplement to the JCIH 2007 Position Statement and reflects concerns raised at the March 2017 Stakeholders meeting. Paragraph D reflects concerns as to language arts raised at that Stakeholders meeting.

Please feel free to contact me; at my law office, 615 Griswold St., Suite 1616 Ford Bldg., Detroit, MI 48226; office # 313 961-7078, Cell # 248 921 0687.

Best Regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Sid Kraizman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Sid" being more prominent.

Sidney Kraizman
Representative of the Michigan A.G. Bell